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I've had two very brief but interesting discussions with leaders of the Life Sciences Division. Although more in-depth review would provide a more complete understanding of the objectives and functions of the Division, some general observations are possible.

First, the very extensive list of areas reportedly covered would seem to be a virtual impossibility with the limited staff available. Of course, not all areas are researched at the same time but even so, the small group of analysts would seem to have a very difficult time to keep well abreast of the comparative science and technology in even a portion of the areas on their list. Surely, it would seem that there are too many subjects or disciplines for too few people. They are spread thin!

Second, the available time and capabilities have usually been spent on support roles for other parts of the agency, primarily to answer the question of how man fits into the weapons systems of the world.

Third, if indeed we are going to have economic conflict with the USSR or any other country, the role of agriculture and the food supplies will play a vital, if not determining, role - witness the current embargo.

From these two discussions, it was not feasible to determine how much was being done or how well it was being done, but the review was sufficient to indicate that this effort should be expanded and a high priority placed on food production, supplies, and processing in the sensitive spots around the world.

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I did not get enough information to be able to compare the needs with the priorities on the many other non-food and agricultural areas being studied in the Division, but we certainly need to have a better "fix" on the food situation.

An examplary list of questions for which answers would seem important if economic warfare is to be even partly successful might include:

1. The Soviet research capabilities and status of technology in breeding the major crops - wheat, corn, sunflowers, soybeans, barley and pasture crops.

2. Agronomic practices and know-how for the same crops and the constraints affecting production and chances of alleviating or increasing them.

3. Livestock breeding and production - constraints that limit or affect production and what is required to change these.

4. Science and technology related to production and use of fertilizers and agricultural chemicals.

5. Irrigation policies, real possibilities and investments.

6. New investments in agriculture and what effects these will have on production.

7. If the Soviets have a surplus of food one year, what are they most likely to do with it? Store it? Where? How?

8. What kind of strategic food reserve does the Soviet Union have? Where is it stored? How stored? Expected ability to maintain this reserve?

9. To what extent do the Soviets use livestock as a reserve food supply?

10. What responsibilities do the Soviets have to their

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"satellites" in time of food shortage, or vice versa?

11. In time of poor crops, what social consequences might there be in the USSR? If additional food and feed supplies are not available elsewhere, what might the Soviet response be?

12. How will the Soviets split their investments between the military and the agricultural sector - in times of food shortage? in times of surpluses?

13. If there is a real food shortage on a world-wide basis some year, who will get the surplus U. S. food (if there is some) - those who can pay for it? those who can't? to the highest bidder? Or would we embargo to keep food prices down at home? What international responses might be expected from any of these scenarios?

14. It is estimated that by 1990 the developing world will be short 100-120 million tons of food. Politically this could be a great destabilizer. What countries are most likely to have the biggest problems and what effects will these have in international politics and international tensions?

15. A real advance in such basic areas as biological nitrogen fixation, photosynthesis and genetic engineering can have enormous importance to the production of foods. We must know what Socialist countries are doing, especially if they do not publish reports of their works in the scientific journals.

16. Research and development and production of biologically active materials that could be used to enhance or destroy agricultural production.

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17. Of course, independent crop estimation and forecasting is a valuable tool for the whole trade and economic confrontation with the USSR or other countries.

Many of these points would also apply to areas of the world other than the Soviet Union because the food picture of one country is very much interrelated with that of many others. Some of the policy issues mentioned above may properly fit into other analytical sections but much basic information is needed to develop better understanding of the policy questions involved.

Although this discussion does not speak to the significance or priorities that should be applied to the biomedical sciences or behavioral sciencies, important areas of concern and need for scientific intelligence are there, too.

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